RHODE ISLAND WATER RESOURCES
WATER USE REPORTING COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes
March 20, 2003

Session Focus: Who is reporting what to whom, how often, and with what accuracy?

1. Existing Reporting in RI

A. Data reported to RIDEM (Liz Scott & Alisa Richardson)

- In general, RIDEM collects very little regarding usage.
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- Special studies conducted on a particular water body or stream pursuant to the wetlands water quality certification process include water usage information, staff gage heights, precipitation, and average daily pumping scenarios. The agency is reviewing three-four projects currently ().

In response to a question, it was explained that data intervals vary-weekly staff gages and monthly pumping.

- Ocean State Power – continuous monitoring station on the Blackstone River
- Return flow data – WWTFS, point source discharge (RIPDES permit) monthly average and daily maximum, semi annual or monthly depending on permit requirements.
- No standard measurement/calibration

- Not submitting report/on site
- Accessible

Mr. Meyer stated that the Kingston Water District has monthly reporting requirements pursuant to a wetlands permit. Once the wells are on line, monthly data will be transmitted electronically as collected from a steam gage/daily recordings taken on a _ hour basis. He noted that newer permits have become more stringent for public suppliers. This is not true of non-public entities. There are farmers with wells and withdrawal permits with no data reporting requirements.

The level of reporting/monitoring requirements is not uniform throughout the RIDEM permits. As an additional example, he referred to the power plant at URI which has no requirements for evaporation loss up to 800,000 gpd. RIDEM should establish more uniform application of regulations. Beyond the 200 feet buffer, no permit or review is required unless there is an impact on a down gradient wetland. Kingston's well location is arguably beyond the wetlands. Siting power lines in a wetland "triggered" the permit.

Legislative authority to regulate but discretion as to application.

In other States environmental quality review procedures/ environmental assessments for state NEPA programs Allow for state review of comprehensive impacts. There have been debates over the years. Rhode Island is smaller geographically and as a matter of scale may not need this level of regulation. A uniform reporting system may be another option. In response to a question, Ms. Richardson stated that permit data is collected in paper form and reviewed by a wetlands biologist. RIPDES data is kept in a database and reviewed on a quarterly basis.

B. Data Reported to Water Resources Board (WRB staff & Henry Meyer)

Henry – WSSMP – Water Supply Management Plans
5 years recurring with 30-month updates

- 16 categories 33 worksheets (attached)
- Water withdrawals per source
- Average daily demand

Kingston – WSSMPS are reviewed by RIDEM, RIDOH, WRB, Statewide Planning

Suppliers report data on major users over 3 million gallons per year. For Kingston they include:

- American Power Conversion
- East Farm Aquiculture

Kent County also submits largest users. The "largest user" is defined system by system.

Systems collected
Significant (seems to be expansion outside of district) expansion triggers a report/permission from the Water Resources Board and/or PUC. Regarding the Water Resources Board, the Act is not specific to process.

There was discussion about how data is collected and the differences in data collection and reporting in the WSSMPs. Mr. Meyer stated that the worksheets are set up to capture monthly data. He noted that billing cycles vary and stated that an automated meter costs approximately $200.00. These are large (3/4") meters only. In addition, staff is required to read and maintain the meters. The financial impact on public water suppliers is significant. For Kingston, the cost of the large meters is $8,000.00 and the overall investment is $250,000. He stated further that not every utility will or can provide all data monthly. It is financially impractical. The East Farm meter alone costs $8,000 plus staff time.

- Efforts to coordinate data management around water
- NEWUDS _____ the plan data
  Have a big picture/designed

Uses are:

- Metered
- Monthly reporting can be done but very expensive

What is ability of _the water supplier to provide data? Basin studies- what data can come from the studies?

C. AD Little Report (WRB Staff & Anne Veeger)

The Arthur D. Little Study – three year process – ADL became State Guide Plan Element 722: Water Supply Plan for Rhode Island.

C. Data reported to Department of Health (Henry Meyer)

- Pretreatment
- Post treatment
- Biologic testing – reports of defects

Don't report with in general or an annual basis
Consumer confidence report
No volume requirements
New Source – report amount you can mechanically pump. Only at that time.

D. USGS Data Handout (Emily Wild)

RIPDES Data – issues/quality check found errors in doing the basin studies.

- Allowing check on estimated use and return flow

Checked RI estimated data against actual metered data. Very close assume 15% consumer use could be studied more.

Discussion of agricultural coefficient and how high the consumptive use for agriculture is. Irrigation systems are designed to eliminate runoff. Dr. Veeger explained that if the figure is below 85% then the irrigation technology is not functioning properly. Consumptive use is mostly loss due to evaporation.
Used published metered data to establish coefficients and estimated data.

Coefficient golf courses – New Hampshire has permitted/metered golf course withdrawals also tested against Massachusetts.

USGS NRCS – Average 20 acres per nine holes in RI

Questions – minor suppliers – community suppliers – SDW regulated
Non community = commercial

E. Golf Course/Power Plant Data (Bekah Rottenberg/ESS staff)
20 golf courses in RI – Water use – estimates – some meter some do not. Past summer June, July, August use.
Irrigation – technology, time of day,

Flow up to compare coefficient to actual golf course data in Massachusetts

Emily Wild – looked at all the Massachusetts data.

As a role model – WMA accounting system – 4 to 5 years of data for each course. Actual versus permitted.

Power plants – information from three Tiverton – report volume used to Stonebridge Water District as a function of monthly billing. Continuous monitoring capability to check/report more often.

· Manchester Station – 2 mg – Reporting as a _____ of monthly billing. Get city water. Early 90s permit restarted in 1995 using 500 gpm. Siting board approval – didn't allow 500 ppm from city – Olneyville well – had to prepare a one time study regarding affects on Woonasquatucket.

  Changed technology reduced to 50 gpm – changed to city water. Cooling use of water comes from Providence River. Reporting to DEM volume/standard chemical characteristics (pH, oil and grease, temperature and sound). Once through cooling.

  No. 3 report gpm limit - 350 gpm. Continue more of Blackstone River. Power stream hydro_____ compensated for…… Air-cooled plant.

Next Date

Closer look at Emily's evaluation of data as a good place to focus for the next meeting.

· Site gaps
· What do we need to answer
· Priorities and where can live with estimate values
· Look at information

April 9th at 9:30 – here